

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 28, 2004

Contact:

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WASHINGTON - The U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) will hold a public, on-the-record hearing on Friday, April 30 at the City University of New York (CUNY) School of Law at Queens College in Flushing, NY on "Bangladesh: Protecting the Human Rights of Thought, Conscience, and Religion." The hearing is scheduled from 6:30-8:00 p.m. in the auditorium of the CUNY School of Law, 65-21 Main Street, Flushing, NY. Congressman Joseph Crowley, representing New York's 7th Congressional District, will participate in this event.

The USCIRF hearing will examine recent trends regarding religious freedom for both Muslims and non-Muslims in Bangladesh and the implications of those trends for U.S. policy. There is concern that the growth of religious extremism could have a negative impact on the rights of all Bangladeshis.

Congressman Crowley, a member of the House Committee on International Relations, is Chair and founder of the Congressional Caucus on Bangladesh. He represents the second largest South Asian community in the United States, based in Jackson Heights, Queens.

WHAT: "Bangladesh: Protecting the Human Rights of Thought, Conscience, and Religion"

WHEN: Friday, April 30, 2004, 6:30-8:00 p.m.

WHERE: CUNY School of Law at Queens College auditorium 65-21 Main Street, Flushing, NY

SIGNS AND PLACARDS ARE PROHIBITED INSIDE THE HEARING ROOM

Attendees will have the opportunity to submit written questions - 3x5 cards will be available. There will be no microphone for audience participation.

Confirmed witnesses are as follows:

Latifur Rahman, former Chief Justice of Bangladesh

U. A. B. Razia Akter Banu, Professor of Political Science, University of Dhaka

Abbas Faiz, Amnesty International

Rosaline Costa, human rights monitor and Coordinator, Hotline Bangladesh

Aroma Dutta, civil society activist and Executive Director, PRIP Trust

The U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom was created by the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998 to monitor the status of freedom of thought, conscience, and religion or belief abroad, as defined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and related international instruments, and to give independent policy recommendations to the President, the Secretary of State and the Congress.

- Dean Michael K. Young
- Felice D. Gaer

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